

CLAIMS OF THE INVENTION

I CLAIM:

*Sub
all*

1. A method of utilizing a voucher in a gaming system comprising the steps of:
issuing at least one voucher having a particular value associated therewith;
5 accepting at a gaming machine said at least one voucher and crediting said value to a player
of said machine;
generating a record regarding said at least one accepted voucher;
storing said at least one accepted voucher in said gaming machine;
retrieving vouchers from said gaming machine; and
10 comparing information regarding retrieved vouchers to information regarding accepted
vouchers contained in said record.

2. The method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said gaming machine is arranged
to accept bill monies and including the steps accepting at said gaming machine said voucher and bill
15 monies.

3. The method in accordance with Claim 2 including the steps of retrieving said bill
monies and said at least one voucher from said gaming machine and sorting said at least one voucher
from said bill monies.

20 4. The method in accordance with Claim 1 including the step of reading information
from said at least one voucher after said voucher is retrieved from said gaming machine.

09631855-080300

5. The method in accordance with Claim 4 wherein said step of reading comprises scanning a bar code associated with said voucher.

6. The method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein multiple vouchers are accepted by said machine and said step of comparing comprises comparing the values of all vouchers accepted by said machine to the values of the vouchers retrieved from the machine.

7. The method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein each voucher has a unique identifying element and said comparing step comprises comparing said identifying element of each retrieved voucher against identification information stored in said record of accepted vouchers.

8. The method in accordance with Claim 1 including the step of reconciling said accepted vouchers with said retrieved vouchers.

9. In a gaming system including at least one gaming machine arranged to accept both bill monies and vouchers and store accepted bill monies and vouchers with one another, a soft count system for reconciling vouchers accepted by said at least one gaming machine with vouchers retrieved by said at least one gaming machine comprising: at least one data storage element for storing data regarding accepted vouchers, including a value of said accepted vouchers, a sorting mechanism arranged to sort bill monies and vouchers retrieved from said at least one gaming machine, and a scanner for reading information associated with said voucher.

10. The gaming system in accordance with Claim 9 wherein said sorting mechanism includes a high speed scanner.

11. The gaming system in accordance with Claim 9 wherein said sorting mechanism includes a bill sorter and a reject area and said sorting mechanism arranged to sort said vouchers into said reject area.

12. The gaming system in accordance with Claim 9 wherein said soft count system includes means for generating an image of at least one of said vouchers.

13. The gaming system in accordance with Claim 9 wherein said soft count system includes at least one hand-held scanner.

14. A method of reconciling vouchers and bill monies comprising:
crediting a value associated with an accepted voucher or bill;
retrieving intermingled vouchers and bills which have been credited;
sorting said vouchers from said bills; and
determining if a total value of said vouchers and bills comprises a total value credited for said accepted voucher or bill.

15. The method in accordance with Claim 14 including storing said vouchers and bills after said crediting.

16. The method in accordance with Claim 14 including the step of scanning said

er-beam scanner for reading said bar code.

em in accordance with Claim 17 wherein said co

mation stored regarding the value of said accep

nce v
reg

00000000000000000000